

TO IMPROVE LANGUAGE SKILLS

Understanding different languages and cultures is necessary for effective communication. For example, in promoting Canadian business abroad, Canadian representatives who possess linguistic and cultural knowledge have a competitive advantage. The Institute's Language School ensures that Canadian foreign service personnel acquire the linguistic proficiency needed to do their jobs effectively. The Language School teaches the official languages, French and English, as well as many foreign languages.

The Canadian Foreign Service Institute's Language School operates on the principle that, for communication to be successful, language skills must be joined by cultural understanding. Its programs are designed so that participants learn other languages within a larger, cultural context.

This approach also means that speaking, listening, reading and writing skills are developed by applying them in "real life" situations similar to those encountered by students in doing their jobs. Thorough analysis of participants' needs allows such job-oriented skills to be incorporated in language programs.

The Institute's use of technology also encourages learning by doing. For example, computerized language labs promote interactive learning, while satellite reception of television from around the world allows teachers to use timely videos as part of language and cultural instruction. The Institute is researching and experimenting with more advanced interactive approaches which create a rich and stimulating learning environment, increasing the quality of instruction and reducing the time needed to learn a new language.



"I was born and raised in Buffalo, New York, but spent my summers in Port Colborne, Ontario. I studied French and Education at Mercyhurst College in Erie, Pennsylvania, and at the Institute for American Universities in Aix-en-Provence, France. My education and experience proved invaluable when I joined in 1981 the staff of the Canadian Consulate General in Buffalo, New York. In 1989, I started as a locally engaged Immigration Program Officer at the Canadian Embassy in Washington, DC.

"At that time, I completed a training course in Canada which provided an overall view of the Canadian immigration program and gave me an opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with other officers from Canadian posts abroad. I recently participated in a month-long training course in Ottawa and Toronto which studied in-depth the Immigration Act and Regulations. After successfully completing this course I was officially designated as an Immigration Officer, which granted me legal authority to make decisions on applications for temporary or permanent residence in Canada.

"I have enjoyed my work with the Canadian government and look forward to continuing my career at the Canadian Embassy in the exciting city of Washington, DC."

*Julia A. Cutler
Designated Immigration Officer*